THE MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON CITY DESIGN

National Endowment for the Arts - United States Conference of Mayors - American Architectural Foundation Spring 2000

Alumni Success Stories Showcased at USCM Winter Meeting

Three alumni of the Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) shared their design experiences with fellow alumni and guests during an informal reception at the USCM Winter Meeting. Mayors Fred Kalisz, Jr., of New Bedford, MA; Alan Larson, of Schaumburg, IL; and William Heydt, of Allentown, PA, spoke about how their respective cities have benefited from their participation in the MICD.

Less than six months into his first term, Mayor Kalisz (MICD 23-1998) came to the institute seeking an alternative to an ugly, city-owned parking garage in the middle of its historic district. The declaration of the New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park six months previous gave the issue new urgency. The building was an eyesore that blocked views and loomed over the adjacent Custom House, a landmark designed by noted architect Robert Mills.

Kalisz envisioned a public gathering place from which one could enjoy the sight of the surrounding historic buildings. Within weeks of the institute, Kalisz had ordered the wrecking ball on the garage. In time for Independence Day festivities on July 4, the garage had been replaced with a parking lot and work had begun on an adjacent public plaza. By early December, the square was graced by stone walls and pavers, landscaping, replicated historic decorative lighting, a fountain and a wood pergola.

Schaumburg Clock Tower
Photo: Paul Schlismann used by permission of Hitchcock Design Group, Naperville, IL

Not content with mere landscape, Kalisz established a commission to develop a suitable memorial to the men of color who were conscripted on this site to serve in the 54th Regiment of the Union Army during the Civil War. In February of 1999, the 136th anniversary of that event, the plaza's was officially dedicated as the 54th Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Plaza. Ultimately, the plaza will include historical information on the regiment itself.

Not all cities have a historic center like New Bedford's. Mayor Al Larson (MICD: Midwest, 1992) of the Village of Schaumburg, IL, had a vision of transforming a crossroads in this "edge city" into a village center. He came to the Institute with a plan that included only retail uses. The resource team advised him that a true town center would have to be more than a shopping center. Mayor Larson agreed. "We decided if we were going to build something at that intersection, it had to fit our vision and our dream." *(continued on page 2)*

Rochester Brings Supermarkets Back into City

In naming him one of 1999's Public Officials of the Year, *Governing* magazine cited Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr. of Rochester, NY (MICD 17) for his "determination to methodically construct an urban revival built on the inclusion of neighborhood and downtown interests... The result has been a remarkable show of civic re-engagement with such on-the-ground evidence of progress as a major food store and commercial complex going up in one of the city's worst neighborhoods, along with a continuing downtown revival... "

These accomplishments fulfill a promise that Mayor Johnson, now in his second term, made during his initial run for office. In a campaign brochure, Johnson pledged to "emphasize community-based economic development solutions to encourage targeted redevelopment of our neighborhoods." In his 1999 State of the City Address, he was able to announce "Our plan to restore supermarkets to the city is an undisputed success." But it wasn't easy.

When the mayor came to the Institute in 1994, a recently vacated supermarket in a struggling inner-city neighborhood was the subject of his concern. The site had been developed following a suburban, automobile-oriented model that was inappropriate to its urban context. Johnson's vision was to reopen the supermarket as the anchor to a more traditional urban, pedestrian-scaled commercial center that would serve the needs of the community. He even brought photographs of a project in Cleveland had provided his inspiration. He also wanted a facility that would reinforce, rather than compromise, existing

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(Alumni, continued from page 1)

The City purchased land in 1995, and the Olde Schaumburg Centre District was dedicated on May 31, 1998. The project incorporated new urbanist design principles, including compact, walkable neighborhoods, and a diverse mix of activities. The District will ultimately include shops, restaurants, offices and housing around a central square.

Because a public place is not truly public without a civic presence, a public library overlooks an open amphitheater in the central square. The elegant Prairie Style building bustles with activity, and together with the central square has become an important community gathering place.

As a finishing touch, a 65-foot clock tower stands at a key roadway intersection. More effectively than any sign, the tower serves as both a wayfinding device and identifier. The project, according to Mayor Larson, "...is a wonderful example of intergovernmental cooperation... the Institute really opened my eyes to what good design is and should be..."

Citizens of New Bedford inaugurate Custom House Square

Back in the 1960s, Allentown, PA, installed sidewalk canopies in the hope of making the City Center competitive with enclosed shopping malls. Eventually, however, the City's three department stores and many of its smaller shops closed anyway.

The canopies were dirty and dark and made people feel unsafe. Mayor Heydt (MICD19-1995) believed that to turn the city around, the canopies had to come down. His instincts were confirmed at the Mayors' Institute, where the design team unanimously agreed that the canopies had to go. Their modern design was in conflict with the character of the Center City and its many historic buildings.

According to Heydt, "the information I received at the institute was instrumental in my obtaining Council's approval to move ahead with the removal of all the canopies." In 1998, the city removed a complete block of canopies and restored historic streetlights, changing the streetscape dramatically. This year, they will complete work on the remaining blocks.

Results have been dramatic. In the last year and a half, over 80 new businesses have come into the area, and vacancies are way down. A new, privately funded downtown arena, now under construction, is scheduled for completion in October of 2000. "We are really pleased with the start we got from the Mayors' Institute," states Mayor Heydt.

Successful projects like these can serve as models for others. During the reception, Mayor James Brainard of Carmel, Indiana, thanked Mayor Larsen and cited an article in the *Wall Street Journal* featuring Schaumburg's town square as inspiration for his own plans to create Carmel City Center in his own community.★

Developing Strategies For Brownfields

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is sponsoring a special session of the Mayors' Institute that will explore different ways cities can address brownfields issues. [For additional information, call the Institute office.]

In addition, the EPA is accepting applications for Brownfields Job Training and Development Demonstration Pilots until March 3. About 10 pilots will be accepted by the end of May, with funding of up to $200,000 each over two years. These funds are to be used to bring together community groups, job training organizations, employers, investors, lenders, developers, and other affected parties to provide training for residents in brownfields communities. The goals of the pilots are to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites contaminated with hazardous substances and prepare the trainees for future employment.

The pilot projects must prepare trainees in activities that can be usefully applied to a cleanup employing an alternative or innovative technology.

Pilot applicants must be located within or near one of the 307 pre-2000 brownfields assessment pilot communities. Colleges, universities, nonprofit training centers, community-based job training organizations, states, cities, towns, counties, U.S. Territories and federally recognized Indian tribes are eligible to apply for funds. EPA encourages applications from coalitions, but a single eligible entity must be identified as the legal recipient. For a copy of the application guidelines visit EPA's web page at: http://www.epa.gov/brownfields under "What's New." ★

MICD: XXVI
October 1999

Charlottesville, Virginia

RESOURCE TEAM

Maxine Griffith, AICP (Chair)
planner

Charles Buki
neighborhood redeveloper

John Kaliski
architect

Sedgwick Mead
developer

Gary Okerlund
architect/landscape architect

Michaele Pride-Wells, AIA
architect & educator

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Hon. AIA
Charleston, SC (keynote)

Stanley Saitowitz
architect

Ken Smith
landscape architect

Karen Van Lengen
educator/architect

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor Sue Bauman, Madison, WI: The West Mifflin Plaza and library are connected to the State Street Mall and the site of the new Overture Project, a $100 million arts district. How can the City make this small pedestrian mall area a more welcoming connection between the Library, the arts district, and State Street?

Mayor Martin Barnes, Paterson, NJ: A private developer seeks public support for a project that would convert vacant upper floors of a block of buildings on Main Street to apartments. Should the City support this project, and is it an effective strategy for downtown revitalization?

Mayor David Hollister, Lansing, MI: Washington Avenue is the city's historic Main Street, but retail has struggled since the construction of a pedestrian mall in the '70s. What design and development strategies should the City take to spur revitalization?

Mayor David Armstrong, Louisville, KY: Broadway is an important gateway and cross-town artery, but has been in decline for many years. How can it be enhanced through adjacent development, streetscape improvements and traffic controls?

Mayor Timothy Kaine, Richmond, VA: Jackson Ward is a community with a rich African-American history. How can neighborhood vitality be restored while maintaining the neighborhood's identity, using activity generated by an expanding convention center as a catalyst?

Mayor Ronald Loveridge, Riverside, CA: What strategies can the City use to stem the decline of an historic residential neighborhood that is threatened by disinvestment and excessive traffic on streets that bisect the neighborhood?

Mayor Hal Daub, Omaha, NE: How should the City approach redevelopment of an abandoned rail yard in the area around a new convention center and arena?

Mayor Howard Peak, San Antonio, CA: The Salado Creek Greenbelt is being transformed into a linear park with multiple purposes. How can the City balance flood control, recreation and habitat preservation opportunities, and fear of crime by neighboring residents?

Survey of Alumni Seeks Success Stories

Results are in on an informal survey that was sent to institute alumni who are still in office. The survey is part of an effort to determine what kind impact the MICD has had on mayors and their cities. Of the 204 surveys mailed, sixty completed responses were received.

The purpose of gathering the information is to document the work of MICD alumni for a variety of purposes. They may appear as case studies in an upcoming book on the Mayors' Institute, feature stories in *City Design*, or as "best practices" on our website (which is still under development). It is hoped that the information will be useful for other communities as well as students and teachers of city design, while demonstrating the effectiveness of the MICD.

As a result of the survey and under the direction of NEA Design Director Mark Robbins, two special institute sessions were scheduled. One on schools as catalysts for community development will take place March 23-25 at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Another session targeting cities dealing with brownfield sites is scheduled for May 10-12 at the University of Pennsylvania. Alumni who made presentations at the USCM Winter Meeting were selected as a result of their survey responses, and still more projects identified through the survey will find their way into a publication that will be provided to future institute participants

Alumni who have additional information that they would like to share are encouraged to contact the MICD National Office at (202) 463-1390.★

MICD: Midwest November 1999

University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati

RESOURCE TEAM

Arn Bortz
developer (guest speaker)

Maurice Cox
architect & educator

Diane Dale, ASLA, JD
landscape architect & educator

John Dowlin
county commissioner (guest)

Udo Greinacher
urban designer & author

Rick Greiwe
downtown promoter (guest)

Mayor Roxanne Qualls
mayor (keynote)

Brenda Case Scheer, AICP
urban designer & planner

Michael Sorkin
urban designer & educator

Beth Sullebarger
preservationist (guest)

Ross Tilghman
transportation planner

Don Zuchelli
economic developer/real estate

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor Chuck Canfield, Rochester, MN: How can the expansion of a civic center/community theater and a new retail/residential and entertainment complex work together to create a viable entertainment district while fitting into the existing urban fabric?

Mayor Karen Hasara, Springfield, IL: How can the City use proximity to the Lincoln Home Site and a new Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Interpretive Center as a catalyst for the revitalization of 9th Street, an important commercial corridor on the eastern edge of the CBD?

Mayor Morris Lanning, Moorhead, MN: Which of several sites under consideration would be most appropriate for a proposed hotel and conference center, given the City's efforts to revitalize downtown and redevelop a dilapidated rail corridor that bisects the CBD?

Mayor Fred Nielsen, Muskegon, MI: A number of proposals have been put forth for the redevelopment of a 250-acre lakefront property. What type and scale of development is appropriate given the City's desire to reconnect the downtown to the waterfront?

Mayor Marilou W. Smith, Kettering, OH: The city is looking for the best way to redevelop two suburban shopping mall sites, one owned by the City outright and one privately owned but partially unoccupied. What sort and scale of development is appropriate for each site?

Mayor John Stozich, Findlay, OH: Main Street across the river from the CBD is lined with dilapidated buildings that turn their back on the river. How can the City combine the redevelopment of this area—which is a designated historic district—with enhanced public access to the river itself?

MICD: Northeast December 1999

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge

RESOURCE TEAM

J. Mark Schuster
urban planner & educator

Cardell Cooper (keynote)
HUD official, former mayor

Eran Ben-Joseph
urban designer & landscape architect

Ellen Dunham-Jones
architect & educator

Dennis Frenchman, AIA
architect & planner

Michael Holleran
urban planner & preservationist

John Riordan
educator & CEO

Joaquin Sabate i Bel
economist & planner

William Andrew Shutkin
lawyer & environmental consultant

Susanna Torre
urban designer & architect

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

(Note: This was the first MICD session to include mayors from abroad. It is hoped that this will lead to a Mayors Institute for mayors from the Catalan region in Spain.)

Mayor Thomas C. Martin, Altoona, PA: The Pennsylvania DOT is building a new northern access route to the city. How can the City minimize the road's physical and economic impact on the Juniata neighborhood business district?

Mayor Lee Young, Auburn, ME: The city is considering converting a former high school into the Great Falls Center for the Arts. What precedents should the city consider along with the proposal's relation to other urban design initiatives that are underway?

Mayor Jaume Farguell i Sitges, Berga, Catalunya, Spain: Berga is on a hillside and is divided by a series of ravines, all of which except for one have been filled in. Should the remaining ravine be left in a natural state or be developed?

Mayor Richard A. Bucci, Binghamton, NY: The historic Kilmer Building is rich in architectural detail and is high on the city's priority list for rehabilitation. What uses for the building will make it an anchor for the area?

Mayor Frank Gaschen, Cumberland, RI: A historic mill complex on the riverfront may be sold. How can the city influence the private redevelopment of the mill complex and relate it to other development initiatives nearby?

Mayor Patricia Dowling, Lawrence, ME: A defunct urban mall owned by the city is under consideration for reuse, and several proposals are under consideration. Which one will best relate to other development projects?

Mayor Jordi Valls i Riera, Manresa, Catalunya, Spain: Revitalization of the old city center is planned. How should the riverfront be developed, if at all, and should further development be encouraged?

Mayor Gerald S. Doyle, Jr., Pittsfield, MA: The City has taken over management of its downtown parking decks and will reassess both their supply and management. How can these facilities be incorporated into an effective revitalization plan?

(Rochester, continued from page 2)

neighborhood businesses. "It fit my major objective of stimulating neighborhood reinvestment," says Johnson. But how to do it was the question he posed to the resource team.

Urban economist and resource team member Dena Belzer, who has researched inner-city retail, agrees that the City's problem is not unique. "These neighborhoods are traditionally under-served in terms of any kind of service be it public, like police, libraries, parks etc., or private household services like accountants, travel agents, medical offices, etc. As a result, low-income people are forced to travel longer distances to obtain these services than people who live in high-income neighborhoods." Belzer continues, "All people should have the opportunity to fulfill the needs of their daily lives within close proximity to their homes."

The Mayor set out to find a supermarket chain willing to invest in this area. Early efforts to recruit a national chain willing to partner with a local nonprofit were unsuccessful. Chains were concerned with poverty and abandonment and felt the vacated site was a bad place to do business. "We literally searched the country," comments Mayor Johnson. Finally, Tops—a local chain that had previously turned the City down—approached Johnson. Tops needed the city's support for an expansion to a northside store. Recognizing that he finally had the leverage he needed, the Mayor offered Tops a deal: Build a new store at the center city site, and

Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr.

the City would approve the chains' request for help at the northside location. "I would not budge from that position," says Johnson. As a condition for moving into the vacant site, Tops asked the City to dedicate two police officers to the store 24 hours a day. Having already decided to relocate a police substation to the area, the City instead gave them 125 officers, housed on site in a detached facility with a community room.

According to Dena Belzer, retail activity like a supermarket, combined with public investment like a police substation, is often a signal to other types of businesses that both the public and private sector are making a financial commitment to these neighborhoods. This lowers the perceived risk for other businesses. "Provision of public services alone, especially social services, is not a real catalyst to neighborhood revitalization." A high concentration of social services "gives the wrong message to potential businesses and thus becomes a disincentive to locate there."

Rochester addressed this concern by paying careful attention to the tenant mix. In addition to the police station, a WIC office is also located at the site. A McDonalds, Dollar Tree, beauty supply stores and doctors' offices provide balance to public services. In the final design, the renovated Tops store anchors an L-shaped plaza with improved pedestrian access provided by direct sidewalk connections to adjoining streets and traffic lights for pedestrian crosswalks.

The project's success has attracted other merchants. "The wonderful thing that has happened—without any contact with the city—two other discount supermarket chains have come into the neighborhood," states Johnson. "Now the residents of that area have service and choice." The new stores have also resulted in jobs for area residents. According to the Mayor, these new stores prove that inducing economic development requires priming the pump with public money.

Mayor Johnson says he is extremely pleased that $3 million of public money has attracted $20 million in private development and helped him to prove that there are viable markets in cities, even low-income, high-density urban areas. Residents in this area of Rochester have adopted the store as part of their family. Mayor Johnson gives credit to the Tops chain for their commitment and corporate social responsibility-- and to the Mayors' Institute for helping the city to create a design that preserves and protects the surrounding neighborhood. ★

CITY DESIGN

The Mayors' Institute on City Design newsletter.

The Mayors' Institute on City Design is an initiative established by the National Endowment for the Arts and administered through a partnership with The United States Conference of Mayors and the American Architectural Foundation. The Mayors' Institute is dedicated to improving the design and livability of America's cities.

To learn more about the work of the Institute, please visit our web site at www.micd.org or contact The Mayors' Institute on City Design, 1620 I Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006-4005 phone: (202) 463-1390 E-mail: micdinfo@micd.org.

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C A L E N D A R

MARCH 23-25, 2000
Mayors' Institute on Schools
University of Illinois, Chicago

April 13-15, 2000
MICD: West
University of Texas, Austin

April 26-28, 2000
Mayors Institute on City Design 27
University of Virginia

May 4-6, 2000
MICD: South
Georgia Institute of Technology

May 10-12,2000
Mayors' Institute on Brownfields
University of Pennsylvania

May, 17-19, 2000
MICD: Louisiana
Tulane University

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ALUMNI NOTES

The National Civic League and Allstate Insurance Company announced the ten 1999 All-America City Award winners. The ten cities honored include: Stockton, CA (Mayor **Gary Podesto**, MICD 24, 1998); Union City, CA; Tallahassee, FL; Wichita, KS; Shreveport, LA; Lowell, MA; Tupelo, MS; Rocky Mount, NC; Tri-Cities, TN/VA; and Greater Green Bay, WI (Mayor **Paul Jadin**, MICD Midwest 1999).

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The Urban Land Institute's 1999 Awards for Excellence were presented to 11 outstanding real estate development projects at an awards ceremony held at ULI's annual fall meeting in Washington, D.C. The 1999 city winners with MICD alumni are: **Coors Field,** Denver, special (Mayor **Wellington Webb**, MICD 19, 1995); East Pointe, Milwaukee, mixed-use small-scale (Mayor **John Norquist**, MICD 13, 1992); 7th & Collins Public Parking/Retail Facility, Miami Beach, Fla., commercial/hotel small-scale (**Neisen Kasdin**, MICD South 1998).

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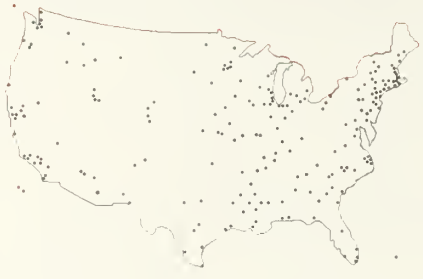
MICD Alumni Winners of the Waterfront Center's 1999 Excellence on the Waterfront Program include: *Historic.* Historic Ferry Slip, Perth Amboy, NJ (Mayor **Joseph Vas**, MICD: Northeast, 1993) *Environmental.* Loxahatchee Preserve Nature Center, West Palm Beach, FL (former Mayor **Nancy Graham**, MICD 16,1994) *Parks.* Downtown Creekfront Project, Denver, Colo. Submitted by Wenk Associates and City of Denver. (Mayor **Wellington Webb**, MICD 19, 1995).



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Governing magazine named **William A. Johnson, Jr.**, Mayor of Rochester, NY (MICD 17, 1994), Public Official of the Year, 1999.

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The International Downtown Association Downtown Achievement Awards Program presented the 1999 Downtown Achievement Awards in Economic Development, Special Achievement Award to Roanoke, Virginia for Center in the Square (Mayor **David Bowers**, MICD 14, 1993). 1999 IDA Downtown Achievement Awards for Physical Improvement Special Achievement Award to Santa Cruz, California for Santa Cruz Downtown Earthquake Recovery (Mayor **Katherine Beiers**, MICD West 1995) City of Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency. Award of Merit to Savannah, Georgia for Savannah College of Art and Design (Mayor **Floyd Adams Jr.**, MICD South 1998). Communication, Cultural, Arts, and Entertainment Award of Merit to Manchester, New Hampshire for Light Up the Night Photography Contest Intown Manchester (former Mayor **Ray Wieczorek**, MICD 8, 1990). Award of Merit to Tacoma, Washington for Tacomaspace.com, (Mayor **Brian Ebersole**, MICD 22, 1997).

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The Joint Center for Sustainable Communities' First Annual Awards were presented to the following MICD cities: *Large-Sized Community Winners:* Ada County/Boise et al. (ID): Treasure Valley Partnership (Mayor **Brent Coles**, MICD: West 1994); Chattanooga/Hamilton County (TN), (Mayor **John Kinsey**, MICD: South 1998); Dayton/Kettering et al. (OH): Make a Difference in Hill & Dales Park (Mayor **Marilou Smith**, MICD: Midwest 1999); Denver City & County/Aurora (CO) (Mayor **Wellington Webb**, MICD 19, 1995); Tempe/ Maricopa County (AZ): Tempe Rio Salado Project, (Mayor **Neil Giuliano**, MICD: West 1995). *Mid-Sized Community Winners:* Lancaster County/ Lancaster (PA): Lancaster Co. Growth Management Strategy (Mayor **Charlie Smithgall**, MICD Northeast 1998).

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National Council for Urban Economic Development Annual Conference 1999 Award Winners: *Partnership (Less than 200,000)* Gold Award to Cedar Rapids, IA (Mayor **Lee Clancey**, MICD 23, 1998); *Partnership (More than 200,000)* Gold Award to Miami Beach, FL (Mayor **Neisen Kasdin**, MICD South 1998); Silver to Milwaukee, WI (Mayor **John Norquist**, MICD 13, 1992).